

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2018

The Honorable Calvin L. Scovel III
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave. S.E. - 7th Floor
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Inspector General Scovel:

We write to express our serious concerns regarding safety lapses at Allegiant Air and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) oversight of our nation's commercial airlines.

According to recent media reports, Allegiant has suffered more than 100 "serious mechanical issues" on flights in the past two years, including engine failure, hydraulic leaks, and loss of cabin pressure. Some of these problems resulted in aborted takeoffs, unscheduled landings, and evacuations of aircraft. Under different conditions, just one of these incidents could have resulted in catastrophic loss of life.

As you know, FAA's safety oversight system includes programs that focus on risk identification and mitigation through a "risk-based system safety approach" and enforcement of safety regulations. The agency also employs certain designee and partnership relationships—presumably with aviation stakeholders that have good safety records—to ensure enforcement and oversight resources are used to monitor entities or activities that pose higher risks.

As members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and the Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Committee, we have prioritized full funding for FAA safety and oversight activities. It's imperative that FAA use these resources effectively while ensuring the safety of the traveling public. The American people must have confidence that when they board an airplane both the carrier and the FAA have taken the all the necessary steps to ensure the highest level of safety and compliance with relevant federal regulations.

If you have not already done so, we request that you immediately open an investigation to determine whether FAA is adhering to the existing safety oversight and enforcement framework, and, if necessary, issue recommendations regarding any weaknesses or vulnerabilities in this framework. Thank you for your consideration of this request, and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,


DAVID PRICE


NITA M. LOWEY


MIKE QUIGLEY


KATHERINE CLARK


PETE AGUILAR